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TELEGRAM

April 15, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 1827 - UNKNOWN)
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, EAID
Captions: None
Subject: TFIZ01: UAE PRESIDENT ISSUES STATEMENT ON IRAQ
Ref: None

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 01827

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CXABU:
ACTION: POL
INFO: DCM P/M ECON RSO AMB

DISSEMINATION: POL
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:MMWAHBA
DRAFTED: POL:STWILLIAMS
CLEARED: DCM:RAALBRIGHT; ECON:TEWILLIAMS

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
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RUCJACC/USCINCENT MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ3/CCJ4/CCJ5// IMMEDIATE
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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STATE FOR IRAQ TASKFORCE, NEA/ARP, NEA/NGA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/15/13
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EAID](#) [IZ](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: TFIZ01: UAE PRESIDENT ISSUES
STATEMENT ON IRAQ

[1](#)1. (U) Classified by Ambassador Marcelle M. Wahba
for reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

[1](#)2. (U) In his first public statement since the
outbreak of Iraq hostilities, UAE President Shaykh
Zayid bin Sultan Al-Nahyan declared the UAE's
commitment to and solidarity with the people of
Iraq in remarks carried by all of the UAE's major
newspapers on 4/15. Zayid reiterated the UAE's

support for Iraqi efforts to rebuild and regain control of their country. He also emphasized the UAE's firm position on the need to protect Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as the right for Iraqis to "determine their destiny without foreign interference or trusteeship." Zayid ordered the UAEG to redouble its efforts to provide humanitarian assistance and instructed the Armed Forces to set up a field hospital in Iraq (see septel).

¶3. (U) Zayid called upon Iraqis to set aside their differences, "rise above hatred" and work together in a spirit of unity and reconciliation. He recalled that the UAE had worked hard to prevent the war. In a reference to his initiative for Saddam to step down, introduced and rejected at the March 1 Arab League Summit, Zayid stated "we addressed the former Iraqi leadership and offered our advice to them, but they chose not to heed our reason and were carried away by their pride." Zayid regretted the deaths of Iraqi civilians as a result of the conflict and the current state of "chaos" gripping much of Iraq.

¶4. (U) Zayid emphasized the importance of the United Nations in maintaining international legitimacy, peace and security. He urged the members of the coalition to allow Iraqis to run their affairs as soon as possible and looked forward to a "healthy" Iraq that can "provide freedom, pride and justice for all."

¶5. (C) COMMENT: Zayid's statement hits on all of the themes the Emirati leadership has emphasized privately with us since the crisis began. The plight of Iraqi civilians, the need to preserve Iraq's territorial integrity (read: Iranian and Turkish ambitions) and the danger of an extended U.S./coalition presence are all addressed. Most of all, however, Zayid's remarks were directed to the UAE people who almost universally opposed the conflict. Zayid's reference to his initiative reminds the public that the leadership, in the face of regional opposition, did its utmost to avert the conflict and put the blame squarely on Saddam. He signaled to his people that it is now time to move in committing the UAE to building a new and better Iraq.

WAHBA